



Illustration by Janet Wingate;
From 'Colorado Rare Plant Field Guide'

EUSTOMA GRANDIFLORUM **SHOWY PRAIRIE-GENTIAN**

Showy Prairie-gentian is an annual or short-lived perennial with 1-several erect stems that are 25-60 cm high and which arise from a long taproot. The opposite leaves are 15-75 mm long and elliptic with entire margins. Foliage is glabrous and covered with a whitish wax. Clusters of 2-6 stalked flowers are borne in an open, branched inflorescence. The calyx is deeply divided into 5 keeled, narrowly lance-shaped lobes, and the white to purple, bell-shaped corolla is 3-4 cm long and deeply divided into 5 elliptic lobes. The egg-shaped capsule is up to 2 cm long. Probably flowering in August.

The joined tube-forming base of the petals is so short in *EUSTOMA* that the corolla lobes look almost like free petals compared to the 3 closely related genera: *CENTAUREUM*, *GENTIANA*, and *GENTIANELLA*.